

CITY OF



March 24, 2014

Federal Communication Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Subject: Statement of Support for the FCC

Dear Federal Communications Commission:

As you are aware, there has been a recent effort at the state level to legislate restrictions upon municipal broadband networks or even partnerships between local governments and independent providers. If local control is not upheld it will harm both the public and private sectors, stifle economic growth, potentially strangle the creation and/or retention of hundreds of jobs, hamper work force development, and diminish the quality of life in local communities. Many Kansas communities will continue to be underserved because there will be no incentive for the major telecommunication communities to increase their investment in broadband infrastructure in what they perceive as a marginal markets.

Currently, The City of Ottawa is providing broadband to business customers who could not receive adequate broadband service or were paying oppressive costs to do so. For example the City was able to provide more than double the bandwidth at less than half the cost to the local school district, saving USD 290 and the taxpayers several thousand dollars a month while at the same time providing greater service and speed. In addition, the City's electric utility uses the network for improved communications between the substations and the power plant. Several businesses in Ottawa connect via the network, including a farmer's cooperative that uses the network for timely information on crop production, grain prices and weather. Without a fast and reliable communications network the farmers would be at a critical disadvantage.

The City of Ottawa strongly supports the FCC restoring and preserving local authority to build networks or partner with other broadband providers. By its very design, Home Rule authority keeps decision making at home, close to the customer where they can best be served. In addition, the revenue generated locally is retained and invested back locally instead of going out of state to the big providers.

The City of Ottawa respectfully requests that the FCC restore and preserve the ability of local governments to invest in and in some cases partner with other broadband network providers.

Sincerely,



Sara Caylor

Mayor, City of Ottawa, KS

cc: Honorable Senator Pat Roberts
Honorable Senator Jerry Moran
Honorable Representative Lynn Jenkins
Honorable Representative Tim Huelskamp
Honorable Representative Kevin Yoder
Honorable Representative Mike Pompeo

RESOLUTION NO. 11623-14

A RESOLUTION in support of FCC efforts to ensure local governments ability to invest in essential internet infrastructure, without state-imposed barriers which would discourage such the development of such necessary infrastructure needs.

WHEREAS, the universal availability of affordable high speed Internet access for all citizens has been identified as a national priority; and

WHEREAS, community/municipal broadband networks provide an option for market competition, consumer choice, economic development, and universal, affordable Internet access; and

WHEREAS, historically, local governments have ensured access to essential services by banding together to provide those services that were not offered by the private sector at a reasonable and competitive cost. This involvement has included electrification, public libraries, and other important services; and

WHEREAS, local government leaders recognize that their economic health and survival depend on connecting their communities, and they understand that it takes both private and public investment to achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS, attempts have been made at the state level to limit or stop further local government deployment of municipal Internet services through legislation, which has the potential of reducing the ability of local government to provide important information and services to their citizens in a timely, efficient, and cost effective manner; and

WHEREAS, local governments, being closest to the people are the most accountable level of government and will be held responsible for any decisions they make; and

WHEREAS, the DC Circuit Court has determined that Section 706 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 unambiguously grants authority to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to remove barriers that deter network infrastructure investment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Ottawa, Kansas does hereby support the FCC efforts to ensure local governments are able to invest in essential Internet infrastructure, if they so choose, without state-imposed barriers, which would discourage such an approach.

Passed and adopted this 2nd day of April 2014.

Attest

Carolyn S. Shuchan
City Clerk

Sarah L. Cor
Mayor